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Visual Effects Society Names Acclaimed Visual Effects Pioneer Ken Ralston Recipient of VES Lifetime Achievement Award

Los Angeles (October 20, 2016) – Today, the Visual Effects Society (VES), the industry’s professional global honorary society, named multiple Academy Award®-winning visual effects pioneer Ken Ralston as the recipient of the VES Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his enormous contributions to filmed entertainment. The award will be presented at the 15th Annual VES Awards on February 7, 2017 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

The VES Lifetime Achievement Award, bestowed by the VES Board of Directors, recognizes an outstanding body of work that has significantly contributed to the art and/or science of the visual effects industry. VES will honor Ralston for his intuitive vision and unparalleled mastery of visual effects. Ralston’s creative vision and fierce technical expertise have earned him an impressive five Academy Awards®. His groundbreaking work has built a rich legacy, one that has profoundly impacted future generations of artists and innovators.

"Ken Ralston is an amazing force and a defining voice of the visual effects community," said Mike Chambers, VES Board Chair. "His creativity, leadership, and ability to use technologies to enhance the art of storytelling have brought us some of the most memorable films of all time. His pioneering work has truly raised the bar and helped redefine entertainment and our industry on a global level. For this, and more, we are honored to award him with the prestigious Visual Effects Society Lifetime Achievement Award."

Ralston is Senior Visual Effect Supervisor and Creative Head at the Academy Award® winning visual effects studio, Sony Pictures Imageworks. He has earned five Academy Awards® including a Special Achievement Oscar® for the visual effects in the 1984 phenomenon, *Star Wars: Episode VI – The Return of the Jedi*. In addition to this, he received Academy Awards for Best Visual Effects for his work as visual effects supervisor on *Forrest Gump* (which was also awarded the Oscar for Best Picture), *Death Becomes Her*, the revolutionary *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* and *Cocoon*. Ralston followed his Academy Award-nominated work as senior visual effects supervisor on Disney’s *Alice in Wonderland (3D)*, with Columbia Picture's *Men in Black III* and most recently Disney’s *Alice Through the Looking Glass*.

Many groundbreaking projects at Sony Pictures Imageworks have benefited from Ralston's artistic acumen including his many collaborations with Academy Award® winning director Robert Zemeckis on the epic *Beowulf (3D)*, *The Polar Express (3D)* and *Cast Away*. Prior to joining Imageworks, Ralston placed his artistic and technical stamp on the films at Industrial Light & Magic. Breaking technological ground, Ralston played a pivotal role in advancing the company's renown.

Ralston's other notable film credits include visual effects supervisor on *The Rocketeer*, *Jumanji*, *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, *Dragonslayer*, for which he was also nominated for an Oscar, and all three films from the *Back to the Future* trilogy, earning an Academy Award® nomination for best visual effects on *Back to the Future II*.

Ralston's career began at the seminal commercial animation and visual effects company, Cascade Pictures in Hollywood, where he worked on more than 150 memorable advertising campaigns in the early 1970s. He built sets, sculpted models, animated puppets, created optical effects and stop motion animation for such iconic commercial characters as Poppin' Fresh, the Pillsbury Dough Boy, and The Jolly Green Giant.

Previous winners of the VES Lifetime Achievement Award have included James Cameron, Steven Spielberg, Ray Harryhausen, George Lucas, Robert Zemeckis, John Dykstra, Frank Marshall & Kathleen Kennedy and Sir Ridley Scott.

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About the Visual Effects Society

The Visual Effects Society is a professional global honorary society dedicated to advancing the arts, sciences and applications of visual effects and to upholding the highest standards and procedures for the visual effects profession. It is the entertainment industry's only official organization representing the extended global community of visual effects practitioners, including supervisors, artists, producers, technology developers, educators and studio executives. VES' 3000+ members in more than 30 countries worldwide contribute to all areas of entertainment – film, television, commercials, animation, music videos, games and new media.

To learn more about the VES, visit www.visualeffectssociety.com and follow us on Twitter: @VFXSociety.